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ABSTRACT

How African American owned ratio stations use their collective resources to deal with educational issues in the communities they serve was studied by examining their community service promotional activities. The type and frequency of activity at these stations during a typical year were studied through a survey of 96 African American broadcast companies, with 123 radio stations, conducted in the first quarter of 1992. The commitment of senior-level management to community service promotional activities now and in the future was examined, along with the station's commitment to community service activity targeting education. Results suggest that community service promotion is an active, important, and highly regarded part of the programing at African American owned radio stations. African American radio has demonstrated its desire to improve the inner city schools for the children of its listeners. The promotional agendas of African American stations have included many hours of working toward solutions to other urban problems, typically focusing on violence prevention, combating the influence of drugs, parent participation in the schools, and promoting citizenship. Change has often been brought about by the commitment of senior level management. Three tables present study findings. Contains 70 references. (SLD)

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Community Service Partnerships:

African-American Owned Radio's Commitment To Education

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to infer how African-American owned radio stations utilized their collective resources to deal with educational issues in the communities they serve by examining their community service promotional activities. This is addressed by identifying the type and frequency of activity at these stations during a typical year, determining the commitment of senior-level management to this activity now and in the short-term future, and examining the station commitment to community service activity targeted at improving education.

This descriptive study was part of a larger project designed to investigate community service activity at culturally-specific radio stations owned by African Americans. Data was collected in a survey of all African-American owned broadcast properties in the United States during the first quarter of 1992.

Community Service Partnerships: African-American Owned Radio's Commitment To Education

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In a plea to help the at-risk student in the inner city, the bonding of families, business, social agencies and media into inner-city community partnerships has been the focus of recent education research (e.g., Hale-Benson, 1986; Johnson, 1992; Kozma & Croninger, 1992). The National Urban League (Jacob, 1987-1988) called for participation in elementary and secondary education through "intensive mobilization and coalition-building activity" (p. 16) within the African-American community. A number of researchers (e.g., Chapman, 1991; Hare, 1988-1989; Hilliard III, 1987-1988; Jacob, 1987-1988; Slaughter, 1987-1988) have suggested an alliance between African-American parents, civic groups, business leaders, politicians, inner city churches and schools would provide the socializing forces necessary to help the at-risk African-American youth overcome educational inequities. The role of education, particularly in secondary and higher education, in the African-American community has been a means to "social mobility and of equality" (Thompson, 1974, p. 231).

Traditionally, and even more so recently, Black/Urban radio,[1] has been an advocate for educational, cultural and political empowerment in

[1]The Radio Business Report ("Radio Format," 1990) defined Black/Urban radio in terms of either traditional African-American music (e.g., gospel and rhythm and blues), contemporary urban formats such as rap, dance, or black adult contemporary), and according to Randall Bloomquist, ethnic talk formats to a lesser extent. See Randall Bloomquist's "The Lack of Black Talkers: 'Waiting For Jackie Robinson'" in Radio & Records (November 29, 1992), p. 40. Stuart H. Surlin (Summer, 1972) in "Black-Oriented

urban areas (e.g. Anderson, 1992; Cantor, 1992; Caffey, 1992; Collins, 1992b; Johnson & Birk, 1993; Lornell, 1988; MacDonald, 1979; St. James, 1992). The mass appeal of Black/Urban radio in the ten largest cities in the United States and urban areas in the South (Bunzel, 1992; Duncan Jr., 1990; "Radio Format," 1990; "Urban Soars," 1991) has illustrated that it has potential to provide schools with a powerful forum from which to communicate its goals to the African-American community.

The literature documents a number of community service promotions conducted by Black/Urban radio stations that have encouraged interaction with school officials and teachers, students, parents and civic groups concerned with education inequities in urban communities (Boyce, 1991; Cantor, 1992; Cobo, 1991; Collins, 1992b, Love, 1990a; Love, 1992b). In particular, these activities have included station-sponsored events coordinated with schools, interactive peer panels taped or broadcast from outside of the station, and audience events with a social, cultural and/or political agenda (e.g., addressing the accomplishments or failures of the public schools, vocational schools and support agencies in the urban community, as well as promoting unity within families and the community.)

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to infer how African-American owned radio stations utilized their collective resources to deal with educational issues in the communities they serve by examining their community

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Radio: Programming to a Perceived Audience," Journal of Broadcasting 16 (3) stated radio stations that define themselves as 100 percent African-American oriented broadcast "soul, rhythm and blues and/or gospel music,...[with less] airtime devoted to educational, talk, and/or news/public affairs programs" (p. 293).

service promotional activities.[2] This will be addressed in the following research questions: (1) what is the frequency of activity during a typical year; (2) what is the nature of these activities; for example what types of community service promotions are conducted, which are the most common, and which are the most successful as determined by audience participation; (3) what is the commitment of senior-level management to this activity now, and in the short-term future; and (5) what is the station commitment to community service activity targeted at improving education.[3]

Black/Urban Radio's Community Service Role

In 1987, Michael C. Keith stated Black/Urban radio is "very community-minded and [airs] an impressive schedule of public affairs programs usually dealing with issues confronting the urban area" (p. 150). Black/Urban radio's commitment to its listeners, and its desire to establish partnerships within the community, has been often expressed through its community service promotional activity. This commitment to community service began with the arrival of WDIA's all black format in 1949[4]:

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[2]Community service promotional activity, as stated in our questionnaire, refers to "station-sponsored promotional activity which specifically addresses the needs of the community." (To a lesser extent, this term also implies station-sponsored public affairs programming which inspires audience interaction or participation.)

[3] This refers to community service activity concerned with improving the educational environment in urban areas, in part by creating school promotions aimed at keeping children and teens in school, providing opportunities for college scholarships, promoting cultural heritage and inspiring interactive programs on the unique problems facing the African-Americancommunity.

[4]WDIA-AM in Memphis was the first black-formatted radio station in the nation and was known for its Goodwill Announcements, according to Louis Cantor (1992) in Wheelin' on Beale (New York: Pharos), which went far beyond the traditional public service announcement including: "announcements about missing persons, lost personal property, church meetings, and socials; it answered appeals for blood donors, helped reunite families, assisted listeners in getting jobs, and even found occasional lost animals" (p.

> The DIA story starts before Martin Luther King, Jr., and Rosa Parks. It begins before Bull Conners and the police dogs, before sit-ins and voting-rights drives, civil rights marches and busing bills, before Stokley Carmichael and H. Rapp Brown, Malcolm X and Elijah Mohammed, black power and white backlash, political assassinations and riots in the ghetto (Cantor, 1992, p. 8).

In a "special report" published in Broadcasting ("Black Radio," 1970, p. 45), an increase in community involvement by black radio stations was seen as the "most significant development" of the 1960s. Stuart H. Surlin (1973) recognized that "black-oriented radio"[5] devoted a significant percentage of airtime to "other" programming, such as call-in shows, personal on-air interviews, and community promotions not typically identified as public affairs or news:

> Research into the feasibility of serving the needs of the community, either white, black or both, through various types of public service approaches also should be considered. The use of only one type of public service program by all radio stations aimed at serving differing types of listening audiences may not be in everyone's best interest (pp. 559-560).

While some attention has been directed at measuring community involvement of station personnel at black-oriented stations, the majority of research on these stations has focused on the amount of air time given to music, public service announcements, public affairs shows and news (Surlin, 1972a; Surlin, 1973; Jeter, 1981).

Black-oriented radio "station-sponsored community service promotions," which include the development of partnerships between radio stations and social, political and cultural institutions in the urban community, have been documented in case studies, autobiographies and

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197). Its community service efforts have included raising money for scholarships and supporting a school for physically challenged children.

[5] See n. 1, for a clarication of the term "black-oriented radio." This term was especially used during the 1970s and early 1980s.

thought pieces (Cantor, 1992; Fornatale & Mills, 1980; Johnson, 1992; MacDonald, 1979.) Peter Fornatale & Joshua E. Mills (1980) said, "Studies in city after city [in the 1950s] showed a majority of the black population listened to the radio stations that seemed most aware of black interests" (p. 16).

In the late 1960s and early 1970s, a number of researchers, as well as the national press, criticized black-oriented radio for its failure to address the needs of the African-American community and its promotion of African-American stereotypes (Berkman, 1966; Fedler, 1973; Ferretti, 1970; O'Connor & Cook, 1973; Meyer, 1970; Meyer, 1971) Louis Cantor (1992, p. 172) dismissed these complaints in Wheelin' on Beale: "...there were very few people who found fault with black radio. Almost everyone, from entertainment critics to entrepreneurial leaders, black and white, rejoiced that more black voices were being heard on the air."[6] However, Cantor also noted that when African-American music at WDIA-AM in Memphis and many other black stations became "integrated into the mainstream of American society" in the early 1970s, the public service commitment of these stations declined as well (p. 225). It was during this time that the Federal Communications Commission and The Office of Communications

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[6]For a more thorough understanding of black radio's commitment to the African-American community see Roland Alston (July 1978), "Black Radio: Taking to the Airwaves in a Hurry," Black Enterprise, p. 20 ; "Black Radio: On a High Wire with No Net," Broadcasting (August 31, 1970), pp. 44-50. See also J. Fred MacDonald (1979) in Don't Touch that Dial: Radio Programming In American Life, 1920-1960 (Chicago: Nelson-Hall) and Mark Newman (1988) in Entrepreneurs of Profit and Pride: From Black-Appeal to Radio Soul (New York: Praeger) for a fairly comprehensive overview of the accomplishments and failures of black radio's community service efforts. Peter Fornatale & Joshua E. Mills (1980) in Radio In The Television Age (Woodstock, NY: The Overlook Press) stated black radio in the 1950s through the early 1960s were leaders in community service, but their community service efforts declined as radio became more music-oriented. Fornatale & Mills discussed the resurgence of "black pride" in radio in 1968 after FCC Commissioner Nicholas Johnson condemned black radio's lack of insensitivity to their listeners' needs (pp. 69-70).

of United Church of Christ called for an increase in African-American ownership and management (Routt et al., 1978; "Coming through the front door of ownership," 1972). Surlin (1972b)[7], in his empirical study on black-oriented radio, concluded an increase in African-American ownership, and at the very least African-American decision-makers, would be critical in establishing an "empathic relationship" with the African-American audience (p. 297).[8]

In 1976, a few years after Surlin's results were published, the National Association of Black-Owned Broadcasters was organized, and it has since demonstrated commitment to African-American audiences. Fred Brown, Jr. (1990), as the NABOB Marketing Director, pointed out:

> Our presence is a testimony of five decades of trials and triumphs, struggles and successes. There is at least one NABOB member in almost every urban market in the country. In small markets, NABOB stations are the sole broadcasters committed to programming music and public affairs geared specifically toward a black audience, reflecting the cultural sensitivities and concerns of the community at large (p.22).

Educational Role of Black/Urban Radio

Black/Urban radio has provided community leadership for over a half-century on a number of issues--education, civic pride, economic development, civil rights, family unity (often through a strong reliance on

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[7]Surlin mailed a questionnaire to seventy-four "100% black-oriented" radio stations. Twenty-one completed questionnaires were received. In 1981, Phillip Jeter (p. 139), in his comparative analysis of "black-owned black-oriented radio stations and white-owned black-oriented radio stations," concluded that both ownership types served equally well in the public interest "when quantitative standards" were applied, however he noted "it may be reasonable to expect superior performance from black owners if one were to apply qualitative standards to Public Service Programming and PSAs" at black-oriented radio stations. Phillip Jeter said interactive public affairs programming was a possible area for future investigation.

[8]Also see Milan D. Meeske (Spring 1973). "Black-Ownership of Broadcast Stations: An FCC Licensing Problem," Journal of Broadcasting 20 (2), p. 269.

the African-American church), the arts, and in the documentation of African-American history (Cantor; 1992; Love, 1992a; Love, 1992b; MacDonald, 1979). Janice E. Hale-Benson (1986) discussed the importance of music in the African-American youth's education, but Black/Urban radio's influence goes far beyond the role of "a passive juke box" (Caffey, 1992). Kenneth L. Ghee (1990) recommended radio and television with "culturally specific programming" as sources of African-American history and pride, as well as publicity vehicles for the promotion of "black achievement in education" (p. 87). The early success of "black-oriented radio" in Chicago, for example, according to Norman W. Spaulding, was fueled by "black illiteracy" and the failure of print media to appeal to African Americans (p. 43). Given the illiteracy and drop-out rates for African-American students, Black/Urban radio, according to Roy Wood, Sr., News Director of Birmingham's WAGG-AM/WENN-FM (Love, 1990a) "has the obligation to be in the forefront of educating us about our history. It's not taught in high school primers like other folks' history" (p. 50).

Even more significant is Black/Urban radio's ability to build coalitions within the community; it has generated community participation as early as the late 1940s. By the 1950s, Alex Haley praised black radio for its ability to serve as a outlet for African-American civic groups (Fornatale & Mills, 1980; George, 1988). It promoted education and equality during the civil rights movement (MacDonald, 1979; Settel, 1967). From the 1940s through the 1970s, stations such as Memphis' WDIA, Chicago's WVON, and New York's WLIB and WWRL were recognized for their community service projects and discussion shows designed to improve the education inequities in the urban community (Fornatale and Mills, 1980; Cantor,

1992). In 1973, WBLS-FM Program Director Frankie Crocker said he could "educate while providing entertainment" (Routt et al., 1978, p. 137).

Especially over the past two decades, Black/Urban radio, addressing many social inequities in its proactive civic and civil rights agenda, has generated audience support and participation from 5000 to approximately 800,000 people at some of the larger community events, in which prominent role models such as Reverend Jesse Jackson and film producer Spike Lee have addressed education, employment, spiritual and family issues (Johnson, 1992; Collins, 1992a). Over the years, Black/Urban radio has sponsored fund-raising promotions for a number of non-profit organizations such as YMCA, Big Brother, Big Sisters, United Negro College Fund, March of Dimes, American Cancer Society and The National Civil Rights Museum, as well as local police departments, social agencies and schools (Cantor, 1992, Love, 1991b; Love, 1991d).

In the 1990s, Black/Urban radio promotions have been responsive to school districts' needs throughout the nation. In September 1991, one of the pioneering black-formatted stations in the nation WDIA-AM, and its sister station WHRK-FM, sponsored the "We Care Enough Day," collecting and distributing 30,000 pounds of paper, pencils, pens and other school supplies to Memphis students who otherwise could not afford them (Lacey, 1991). KMJM-FM, St. Louis, Missouri, has helped sponsor homework hotlines and has participated in several successful parent and peer panels, involving open discussions of drugs, gangs and school (Boyce, 1991; Carroll, 1989).

This commitment to education has been particularly documented in Philadelphia, where Black/Urban radio promotions have included contests encouraging students to stay in school, the annual recognition of

outstanding teachers and students, station-sponsored school pep rallies geared to preventing drug abuse and violence in the schools and community, and the production and distribution of specially designed book covers imprinted with "Do The Right Thing Stay in School" (Cobo, 1991; Collins, 1992b; Love, 1992b). Moreover public affairs shows, like those aired on Philadelphia's WDAS-AM/FM have encouraged the public to address important issues in the school system, such as district cutbacks in vocational education and training, the physical condition of the school buildings and an examination of specific curricular needs of African-American students (Collins, 1992b). WDAS-AM/FM Promotion Director E. Steven Collins (1992b) discussed the commitment of Black/Urban radio to educating inner city youth in Philadelphia:

> There are a number of issues in public education that we're concerned about, that have to be dealt with, so there are immediate issues and long-term issues that black radio, (eg., management, news, public affairs), continually must commit to and research, and deal with to make the public aware, to advocate a change which is a major part of black radio, unlike a lot of other radio stations that will give it news coverage but not really advocate and 'say hey let's do something' or 'why is this,' or bring people on who make that kind of passionate plea for a change.

The Family: "The Primary Educator"

Black/Urban radio has recognized the importance of family unity in overcoming education inequities in the African-American community. The National Urban League (Jacob, 1987-1998) has called the family "the primary educator" (p. 16). The mission of Black/Urban radio has been to promote family unity and to acknowledge cultural traditions unique to the African American. WDAS' Unity Weekend, co-sponsored by the City of Philadelphia, began in 1978 when the "need for family reunification became

a pressing concern" (Collins, 1992a). In 1991, Unity Weekend provided informational, political and culturally specific events as well as entertainment for approximately 800,000 people:

> But there's a lot of planning and thinking behind the event, we hardly ever have rap music at Unity Day in any featured way. Most of the entertainment is directed specifically to family oriented audiences, everything that day, the whole day is laid out to attract the elderly, the young, teenagers, moms and dads, clergy, everything. There are millions of things that we build in so that there's something for everybody. And people usually come out. As I noted, the numbers have gotten quite unbelievable to go from 50,000 ten-eleven years ago, to almost a million last year and to be looking to attract a 1.3 million [in 1992]. It speaks volumes to black management and the cooperation that previous city government has given us (Collins, 1992a).

Juneteenth celebrations, commemorating the actual day of freedom for African Americans on June 19, 1865, two years after emancipation, are another important part of the African-American heritage and community. WOKS-AM/WFXE-FM in Columbus, Georgia attracted about 18,000 people to the third annual "Family Day in the Park ("Day of music," 1991; Davis Broadcasting, 1991). Proceeds were donated to the United Negro College Fund, Metro Columbus Urban League, Fraternal Order of Police and Easter Seals ("Family Day", 1991). Another Juneteenth celebration, sponsored by KJMS-FM, drew about 40,000 listeners to Martin Luther King, Jr. Park for a seven-hour concert in Memphis (St. James, 1992). WQUE-FM in New Orleans generated local publicity when it attracted thousands from Louisiana and Mississippi to a three-day family event, and sponsored an essay writing and coloring contest on the significance of Freedom Day. A KJMS listener wrote,

> Juneteenth is our 4th of July, Thanksgiving, and Christmas rolled into one gala celebration of liberty. It is a day to celebrate our freedom, our families, our friendships, and our never-ending quest for equality (Love, 1991a, p. 42).

Methodology

The population for this study was defined as all African-American owned broadcast companies holding licenses for one or more radio stations in the United States. Given the nature of the inquiry, the individual within the organization identified as the respondent was the senior operating manager at the *station* level. Because of the initial estimate of the size of the population, it was determined that the instrument (a self-administered questionnaire) be sent to the entire population.

Using the Total Design Method (Dillman, 1978), a questionnaire booklet and cover letter were developed and pretested on three groups per TDM recommendations. The booklet contained 28 questions designed to address the frequency, nature and range of community service promotional activity at the respondent's station or stations. The question structures included a combination of closed-ended with ordered choices, partially closed-ended, and a very few open ended questions (including a request for comments or additional information on the last page of the booklet).

A list of the population was secured from the National Association of Black-Owned Broadcasters (NABOB). The information from the NABOB list (station call letters, addresses and the names of the general manager) was compared to that in the Broadcasting Yearbook (1991), and found to be very similar.

After checking on the discrepancies between the two lists by calling those stations affected, each member of the population was mailed in January of 1992 the following information in a business-size envelope: cover letter, questionnaire and a pre-stamped, self-addressed envelope. A simple coding system was developed to ensure confidentiality, but allowing

for follow-up mailings to nonrespondents. Ten days after the initial mailing, a follow-up postcard was mailed to all members of the population, thanking respondents for their participation, and encouraging nonrespondents to mail in their completed questionnaires, or, if they had misplaced the initial mailing, to contact the researchers by a collect phone call so another questionnaire could be promptly mailed to them. For those letters or postcards returned for either incorrect or dated addresses or names, the original list of the population was updated and subjects were immediately sent another mailing.

Three weeks after the initial mailing, nonrespondents were determined and sent another letter with a much stronger appeal for participation. The purpose of the study was restated, but the importance of the individual subject's participation was emphasized throughout the appeal. Another questionnaire and return self-addressed and stamped envelope were included.

Two weeks after the third mailing, an attempt was made to contact each nonrespondent personally by phone, and, if they were not available, population list information was confirmed and a message was left encouraging the subject to participate.

Results

A survey of the population of all radio stations owned by African Americans was conducted in the first quarter of 1992. The study was designed to have top management at the operating unit level respond to a mail questionnaire dealing with community service promotion at their station(s).

The list of the population was generated by comparing the National Association of Black-Owned Broadcasters (NABOB) list of the population to Broadcasting Yearbook, then a mail and phone call campaign to confirm conflicting data and recent changes. This process revealed 96 African-American broadcast companies held licenses to 123 radio stations across the United States. This survey had a response rate of 54 percent of the population (covering 52.8 percent of the operating units). This rate of response is considered to be above average for mail surveys dealing with "'elite' of management-level populations" (Garrison & Salwen, 1989, p. 78).

As for the characteristics of the responding stations, subjects were asked to reveal station facilities and format(s). The following is a breakdown of the facilities:

AM station	48.4 %
FM station	21.9
AM/FM combination	28.1
No response	1.6

This breakdown reasonably parallels how the sub-groups occur in the population.

Radio in general is in a fragmented state in terms of format. However, in this survey three format types[9] dominated:

Urban contemporary	48.4 %
Gospel	34.4
Black Adult Contemporary	25.0

[9]Some stations engage in "block programming," and therefore would report more than one format type. Format types were generated from lists in Broadcast Yearbook (1991), Radio & Records (1990/1991) and other trade publications. Respondents were provided partially closed-ended questions in the survey instrument.

All of the respondents, save one, indicated their stations were involved in some type of community service promotional activity. When asked the number of community service promotions in which the respondent's station was involved in 1991, 48.4 percent indicated "more than 10," and 17.2 percent reported a frequency of "7 to 10." When asked if 1991 was "typical" of the station's level of community service promotional activity, 79.7 percent stated that it was typical (of those stating 1991 was atypical, over 71 percent indicated that typically they were involved in "more than 10" promotions of this nature).

In regard to future expectations, 51.6 percent of the responding managers indicated that over the next five years they anticipated the level of community service promotional activity would "increase somewhat," while 29.7 percent stated the level of activity would "increase dramatically."

In response to a partially closed-ended question listing eleven promotional themes (culled from the literature) and two opportunities for "other" responses, elementary and secondary education promotions (Education K-12) were the second *most often mentioned* (Drug Awareness was most often mentioned) by reporting radio station managers. Education promotions dealing with colleges or universities was fifth. Both of these promotional categories were among the eleven predetermined responses (See Table 1).

Subjects were also asked to determine what promotional category they felt was *most successful*. Education K-12 was most often considered to be the one most successful, while Voter Registration and promotions dealing with colleges or universities were second and third respectively. Questions which probed those categories in which stations were *most involved* had Education K-12 as the most often mentioned theme, while

Drug Awareness and promotions concerning colleges or universities were second and third respectively (See Table 2).

Community service promotions in the form of "events" (promotions in which the audience is required to attend a function outside the home or confines of the station) is the prime example of promotional activity of this nature dealt with in the literature (e.g. Cantor, 1992; Love 1990b; Love 1990c; MacDonald, 1979). Subjects were asked to respond to a series of questions dealing with community service promotional "events." When asked how many promotions were in the form of an event, 45.3 percent of responding station managers stated "'most of them," and 15.6 percent indicated *all* of them. The literature has also documented the tremendous crowds drawn to community service promotional events sponsored by African-American owned radio stations. When asked: "What was the attendance at the best attended event sponsored by your radio station, 15.6 percent of the respondents stated "more than 10,000" people, with one station indicating 750,000 in attendance at its top event. However, in the aggregate, 64.1 percent of the stations indicated less than 3000 people at their best-attended event, with 78.1 percent stating that normal attendance at community service promotional events was "under 1000." In terms of the category of community service promotion that yielded the best attendance, the one most often mentioned was K-12 Education, with Voter Registration second and education promotions dealing with a college or university third.

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to infer how African-American owned radio stations utilized their collective resources to deal with educational issues in the communities they serve by examining their community

service promotional activities. Of all the media, the medium of radio is arguably the most targeted and competitive. Survival, in an arena with over eleven thousand channels, depends on those stations that do the best job of serving their respective audiences. And a major part of that service is the station's involvement in promotions which have a direct impact on the wants, needs and desires of their individual constituencies (Eastman, 1991).

In their discussion of agenda-setting, Donald L. Shaw and Maxwell E. McCombs (1989) described the role of media as one "of civic mobilization" (p.119). As discussed in the review of literature, African-American radio has been responsive to its communities' needs, and moreover has openly advocated unification and change, especially within the urban community.

This study has presented evidence of the pervasive occurrence of African-American owned radio station sponsorship of promotions designed to "specifically address the needs of the station's community" with over 98 percent of the respondents indicating active engagement in this type of activity. The commitment at the station level was strong (according to the figures stated on the annual frequency of occurrence of this type of promotional activity) and the outlook for the future appears to indicate that this will increase. Aggregating these responses would seem to indicate that there exists a strong commitment on the part of management, and that this commitment will continue, at least in the short term.

With much activity in the form of events, the opportunity for this medium of mass communication to engage interpersonally with the audience or community naturally exists. In verbatim responses to an open-ended question on decision making, subjects indicated that ideas for particular promotional activities often came from employees who by design

or happenstance picked up on special needs in their community (e.g., at a civic meeting or when covering a news event), brought it to the attention of station management, who in turn collectively developed a concept to address the need. Further indication of this came from the actual promotions mentioned by subjects when asked to *name* their *most successful promotion* (See Table 3).[10]

The results of the survey also show education, drug awareness, alcohol awareness and specific health problems are among the most common types of community service promotional activities in which the stations are engaged. The recognition of these as environmental factors is necessary in the design and implementation of educational solutions (e.g. Chapman, 1991; Hale-Benson, 1986; Johnson, 1992). Successful interactive and efficient partnerships between the mass media and the very groups concerned have been discovered to be the most credible and effective when searching for answers to education problems in a community.

Regardless of the individual situation of a responding station (including format, market size and decision making strategies), education was the promotional theme that seemed to draw universal concern. Several of the verbatim responses indicated that through the stations' recognition of and concern for the special challenges faced by the African-American community, regardless of the particular need, educating the community of that need (especially when it concerns children), is critical to facilitate positive change:

> Because I feel if we can educate our own, we can significantly reduce the problems facing our community.

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[10]When asked what criteria they used for judging the success of a promotion, audience response was the criterion most often mentioned.

> Most organizations and individuals realize the importance of focusing on education and other problems at an early age.
>
> We attempt [through these activities] to build self-esteem.
>
> (Verbatim responses from questionnaires.)

Conclusion

Based on this study, community service promotion is an active, important, highly regarded part of the programming at African-American owned radio stations. Through African-American radio's promotional commitment to education, it has demonstrated its desire to improve the inner city schools for the children of its listeners. African-American radio's promotional agenda has included many hours of working toward solutions for other urban problems (eg., substance abuse, voter apathy, unemployment, violence and housing). Typical promotions have advocated attending church, keeping the family together, educating youth, getting parents involved in schools, stopping the violence on the streets and in the schools, combating the urban influence of drugs, and promoting citizenship through on-going voter registration efforts and civic pride (eg., Anderson, 1992; Caffey, 1992; Collins, 1992b; Sheppard, Jr., 1983). These promotions have encouraged positive change in the African-American community, facilitating learning in the at-risk environment.

Often change in the African-American community has been inspired from the leadership of senior level management at African-American-owned radio stations, as displayed by their involvement in the decision-making priorities assigned to community service promotions. Alone, this one factor has been indicative of the stations' commitment to the African-American agenda.

African-American radio's partnership with the community is based upon an understanding of the urban family and culture, and its desire to succeed through education, and civic and political empowerment. WDIA/WHRK Vice President Rick Caffey (1992) summarized this aspect of Black/Urban radio by asking, rhetorically, "instead of just reaching an audience, how do you *relate* with an audience that is culturally different (emphasis added)."

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Table 1

Most Often Mentioned Promotional Themes by Reporting Stations:

Theme	% of Stations Reporting
Drug Awareness	92.2 %
Education (K-12)	79.7
Voter Registration	76.6
Employment	73.4
Violence	62.5
Education (College)	62.5
Alcohol Awareness	57.8
Poverty	51.6
Housing	48.4
Parenting	43.8
Day Care	14.1

Table 2

Promotional Themes in Which Stations Indicated They Were "Most Involved":

Theme	% of Stations Reporting
Education (K-12)	26.6 %
Drug Awareness	21.9
Education (College)	15.6
Employment	6.3
Voter Registration	4.7
Poverty	4.7
Housing	3.1
Parenting	1.6

Table 3

Partial list of the verbatim responses to question on which single community-service promotion stations felt was the most successful.

Each one, teach one!	Commitment to education.
United Negro College Fund Radiothon*	
Class Act ("School values")	
On Time for School	Martin Luther King Scholarship Program
We Care Enough Day (School supply drive)	
Literacy Program	Project Literacy 2000

*Several broadcasters indicated they had fund-raisers for local colleges and universities.